

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, CGEN, GE

SUBJ: JEWISH CEMETARY IN BERLIN

REF: A) STATE 031708; B) BERLIN 5210

1. ON FEBRUARY 10 EMBOFFS VISITED THE ADASSA ISRAEL CEMETERY OF THE ISRAELITE SYNAGOGUE COMMUNITY ON WITTLICHERSTRASSE IN BERLIN-WEISSENSEE. THOUGH IT DATES FROM THE SAME PERIOD AS THE WELL-KEPT CONSERVATIVE CEMETERY IN WEISSENSEE WHICH WE VISITED ON FEBRUARY 3, THIS ORTHODOX JEWISH CEMETERY APPEARS UNATTENDED, IS OVERGROWN WITH WEEDS, AND SHOWS SIGNS OF VANDALISM AND DESECRATION. WE ESTIMATE THAT AT LEAST 10 PCT OF ALL GRAVE STONES HAVE BEEN TOPPLED OR CRACKED, AND IN ONE SECTION OF THE CEMETERY THE DESTRUCTION FIGURE APPROACHED 30 PCT. THE CEMETERY IS PROTECTED ON TWO SIDES BY A WEATHERED BRICK WALL AND OPENS ONTO A SMALL FIELD TO THE NORTH THAT IN TURN BORDERS ON A NEWLY-PAVED STRETCH OF ROAD AND A RECENTLY-CONSTRUCTED SCHOOL BUILDING. TO THE WEST STAND APARTMENT HOUSES OF THE EARLY 1950'S VINTAGE AND TO THE EAST AND SOUTH A LARGER CHRISTIAN CEMETERY.

2. WE NOTE THAT THE CEMETARY IS LOCATED IN A RESIDENTIAL AREA WITH A SCHOOL NEARBY, WHILE NEW APARTMENT BUILDINGS ARE BEING CONSTRUCTED A FEW BLOCKS AWAY. THE GROUNDS COULD WELL FIGURE INTO PLANS FOR FUTURE APARTMENT

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OR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION IN THE AREA.

3. WE STOPPED BY THE OLDER JEWISH CEMETERY ON
SCHOENHAUSER ALLEE BUT FOUND IT CLOSED UNTIL MARCH 15.
IT ALSO APPEARED TO BE IN A RUN-DOWN STATE BUT WELL
SECURED.

4. WE PLAN TO DISCUSS THE STATUS OF ALL THREE JEWISH
CEMETERIES IN EAST BERLIN DURING OUR FEBRUARY 17 MEETING
WITH DR. PETER KIRCHNER OF THE EAST BERLIN JEWISH
COMMUNITY (JUDISCHE GEMEINDE). HE IS CURRENTLY AWAY
FROM EAST BERLIN ON BUSINESS.GROVE

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